Department of Music
University of Alberta

Studio 27

NEW MUSIC SERIES

Visiting Artist

François Houle, clarinet and electronics

Sunday, November 21, 2004 at 8:00 pm

Fine Arts Building 2-7

Program

DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC

Program

Aeriali X François Houle

Thiodhlac Joél-François Durand

Aeriali I François Houle

In a bed, where the moon was sweating, Resonance #1 Paul Dolden

deflector Laurie Radford

Illicit François Houle

Dust John Oliver

Program Notes

Over the last decade François Houle has been active in several musical spheres, including musique actuelle, new music, and more recently chamber music and world music. A founding member of Standing Wave, Safa, and the Turning Point Ensemble, François has also collaborated on several projects with some of today's leading international performers, improvisers and composers. He is a graduate of McGill University and the Yale School of Music. He won the National Debut competition in Montreal and has received several awards and scholarships, including Yale's Benny Goodman memorial scholarship. He has appeared on major Festivals across Canada, Europe, and the United States and has released several recordings of his own music on Canadian labels such as Spool, Songlines, Red Toucan, as well as Germany's between-the-lines label. In 2001 he was listed by Downbeat magazine as "Talent Deserving Wider Recognition". He has toured extensively. A West Coast Music Awards and Juno Awards nominee, François's latest CD, with French pianist Benoît Delbecq, was awarded "Best Jazz Album of 2002" by France's Jazzman magazine.

As a producer he has ceated soundtracks for Radio-Canada documentaries and radio dramas, incidental music for theatre, and music for dance (Kokoro Dance, Frozen Eye Dance). He has produced over a dozen recordings which have received high praise from the international press.

His clarinet playing transcends the stylistic borders associated with his instrument. Inspired by musical innovators such as Steve Lacy, John Carter and Evan Parker, he has developed a unique improvisational language on his instrument. Houle's playing is virtuosic, rich with sonic embellishment and technical extensions: circularly breathed

harmonics, slap-tonguing, burrs, key-clicks, multiphonics, an assortment of breath effects and mouthpiece effects. His work encompasses electroacoustic, classical, contemporary, improvised, world, and jazz-inflected music. He is a musician who consistently masters each musical genre he approaches, adeptly imbuing it with a conspicuous creativity and originality.

He has actively expanded the clarinet's contemporary repertoire by commissioning several solo and chamber works from today's leading Canadian and International composers. Collaborations include projects with composers Paul Dolden, John Burke, Giorgio Magnanensi, William O. Smith, and John Oliver. A founding member of Standing Wave, he is also a member of the Vancouver New Music Ensemble, and the Turning Point Ensemble, with which he has premiered well over a hundred new works.

As an improviser Mr. Houle has performed with Marilyn Crispell, Myra Melford, Ab Baars, Marc Dresser, Georg Gräwe, Joëlle Léandre, Evan Parker, Dave Douglas, Benoît Delbecq, and Michael Moore, among others. Performance highlights include several Canadian and European tours, the Festival de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville, New Music Across America, Time Flies, ISEA, ISCM, Les Trois Jours de la Grande Musique (Groningen, Netherlands), and Seattle's World Jazz Festival. In the classical world he has performed with Trio Fibonacci, the Vetta chamber music series, harpist Rita Costanzi's sextet, and with the Festival Vancouver Chamber Players (Brahms and Mozart Quintets, Schubert Octet, among others)

He studied composition with Martin Bresnick and William O. Smith. His works have been performed by Upstream Orchestra, the Standing Wave Ensemble, the Atlantic Jazz Festival's Root Orchestra, Frozen Eye Dance, The NOW Orchestra, Garbo's Hat, as well as his own critically acclaimed groups *François Houle Cryptology* and *The François Houle Trio*. His compositions have been recorded for broadcast by CBC-Radio, Radio-Bremen, WDR-Köln, NPS (Netherlands), and the BBC.

"...François Houle performs in this spirit: with the overtonal doublings of (Evan) Parker and the paradoxically compact sense of extended form and freedom evident in the late, great John Carter's clarinet works."
-Andy Bartlett, Earshot Jazz, Seattle

"...nothing short of world-class..."
-Michael Point, Austin-American Statesman

"This renegade classical virtuoso has, in not much more than five years, established himself as one of Canada's leading improvising musicians, with a following that extends beyond our borders and into the upper echelon of the world's creative players."
-Alexander Varty, The Georgia Straight, Vancouver

"François Houle's music hovers unselfconsciously above categories and styles."
-Art Langes, Musicworks 60

"First rate performance..."
-Ben Ratcliff, New York Times

Aeriali

Aeriali is a suite of solo clarinet improvisations that utilizes several distinct extended techniques that I have acquired, developed, and perfected over the last decade. These techniques overlap, collapse, clash and permutate into an intricate sonic web, pushing the performer to the brink of chaos.

Stylistically, I have attempted in my improvisational approach to achieve a fine balance between the physicality required in the execution of these techniques and their resulting emotional value. Thus creating an environment where the extreme conditions faced by the performer lead towards the transcendental, out-of-body experience that is much talked about by practitioners of Jazz and experimental music.

My fascination (obsession, really) with the sense of urgency and the sheer physicality that emerges from the execution of these ideas has led me to think of my instrument as a transmitter, akin to television aerials, hence the title. The notion of the performer as a medium (guru, shaman), a concept present in the music of many cultures, is somehow omnipresent here. The ritualistic quality in this music is not accidental, as most of the inspiration for my musical vocabulary on the clarinet is drawn from an eclectic range of sources, such as Solomon Island bamboo flutes, Sardainian Launeddas, Tuvan throat singing, and free jazz (Evan Parker, John Carter, among others).

In a bed, where the moon was sweating, Resonance #1

Part of the Resonance Cycle plays with the notion of intimacy in music. Like all my music, the tape portion is recorded with close-miking techniques which is intended to produce a fateful intimacy with the sound sources. In this case, the soloist is often surrounded by their own sound creating a dissolving of the singular with 'the other,' which is in fact the performer reflected back in a narcissistic fashion.

Beyond these elements, the Resonance Cycle also uses voice, which is perhaps the most intimate and seductive sound of all because it represents the body covered with appearances, illusions, traps, animal parodies and sacrificial simulations. However, as in all my music, these elements are multi-tracked to create a situation of excess and perhaps to leave us sweating in our bed of memories.

As for the philosophic and æsthetic intentions of the hand percussion parts, it is well known to any consumer of media music that in order to be considered artistic you have to have an African percussionist. Like the other elements in my music, the African percussionist turns into a dense tribe of sounds, implying some form of primitive seduction or perhaps a post-modern revenge.

In a Bed Where the Moon was Sweating, Resonance #1 was recorded and produced in the composer's private studio. The live clarinet part was recorded by François Houle in December 1993. It was commissioned by François Houle with assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts. The work was premiered by François Houle on November 7th, 1993 at a Vancouver New Music Society concert. This work was reprocessed, remixed and remastered in the composer's studio in 2001-02.

Paul Dolden begins his career at age 16 as a professional electric guitarist, violinist and cellist. Excited by the possibilities offered by recording technologies, Paul Dolden turns to contemporary modes of production and dissemination in the creation of his music. At age 29, he wins the first of a string of European awards that establish him as a composer.

Now the winner of over twenty international awards, Paul Dolden's music is performed in Europe and North America to wildly enthusiastic audiences.

In a career spanning over twenty-five years, Paul Dolden has perfected his unique approach to audio technology, using it as a platform from which to launch or capture otherwise impossible musical performances. In this way, he makes his computer behave like a new, virtual orchestra and manipulates it with as much sensitivity as he would a traditional one. His compositions are characterized by a maximalist aesthetic in which hundreds of digitally recorded instrumental and vocal performances are combined in multiple layers.

Paul Dolden's music has been described as the "missing link" between jazz and rock and the highbrow concert tradition. Critics have called it "music for the information age, enlisting noise, complexity and beauty in its quest for excess," and characterized it as "apocalyptic hyper-modernism."

The early works employ a unified approach to timbral and harmonic variation. Under the influence of post-modernism, Paul Dolden's concerns have shifted to include the juxtaposition and superimposition of disparate musical styles evident throughout the Resonance Cycle of works (1992-96). Always working to surpass himself, with the Twilight Cycle of recent years Paul Dolden boldly investigates the forbidden fruit of contemporary new music—melody and dance rhythms.

deflector
A myriad of musics and styles engulf my ears on a daily basis. Composition is often an activity of response and conversation with the sonic world in which we reside. During the act of conception and writing, I often feel that I am deflecting the sound objects being thrust at me: sometimes defensively (rejection), more often inquisitively (adoption and transformation). In *deflector*, the clarinet is the principle reactive agent in this compositional act, to which is added a prerecorded layer of manipulated sound materials and a layer of "deflections" (transformations) of the live clarinet and prerecorded materials. In addition to a variety of basic digital signal processing transformations of the clarinet sound, granulation as well as audio capture and subsequent transformation of the live clarinet's material "deflect" the live clarinet and provide a self-generated counterpoint.

deflector is in many ways an homage to Luciano Berio who left us in 2003. Fragments of clarinet music by Mozart and Brahms join with that of Berio to "deflect" the current intentions of the live clarinet as well as to "reflect" upon the enduring contributions of these creators. *deflector* was written for clarinetist Jean-Guy Boisvert.

Canadian composer Laurie Radford creates music for diverse combinations of instruments and voices, acousmatic music, and performers in interaction with computer-controlled signal processing.

Radford studied music, composition, and music technology at Brandon University, The University of British Columbia, McGill University, The Banff Centre for the Arts, Les Ateliers UPIC (Paris), and the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für Neue Musik. His music has been performed and broadcast throughout North and South America, Europe and Asia.

He has received commissions and performances from a variety of ensembles and soloists including Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, L'Ensemble contemporain de Montréal, Esprit Orchestra, Ensemble Résonance, code d'accès, Traquen'art, GroundSwell, Pro Coro Canada, Concerts M, Jean-François Guay, Laura Wilcox, Jean-Guy Boisvert, lanza-Sheppard Duo, Trio Fibonacci, Duo Kovalis, the rESOund Festival of Contemporary Music (Edmonton), the Biennale MusMix (Montréal), the Biennale Musique en scène (Lyon), Cantai Festival of Dance and Music (Taiwan), Miami New Music Festival (Florida), Musica Viva (Portugal), Happening New Music Festival (Calgary), and the Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton Symphony Orchestras. Radford's music has received awards from SOCAN, the International Composers' Competition "Kaszmierz Serocki" (Warsaw, Poland), and the WSO New Music Festival Composers' Competition. Recordings of his music are available on *empreintes DIGITALes*, McGill Records, PeP Recordings, Clef Records, and Fidelio Audiophile Recordings.

Laurie Radford has taught at Concordia University, Bishop's University, McGill University and the Domaine-Forget. He currently teaches electroacoustic music, music technology, and composition at the Department of Music, University of Alberta. He is a member of the Canadian Electroacoustic Community (CEC), the Canadian League of Composers (CLC), the International Computer Music Association (ICMA), the Borealis Electroacoustic Music Society (BEAMS) and is an affiliate of the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN).

Dust
With *Dust*, I return to the idea of the sonic universe of my work *El Reposo del Fuego* for tape and synthesizer. This work ended with the phrase "El Tiempo es polvo" (time is dust). *Dust* therefore continues where *El Reposo del Fuego* ended and explores the concept of time as dust. The themes of *El Reposo del Fuego* were disaster, sadness and loss since I wrot the work at the time of an earthquake in Mexico. I began work on *Dust*, which explores the sensation of the compression of time during a catastrophe, one month before the September 11, 2001 attack in New York and finished it shortly after, asounded by this synchronicity.

John Oliver came to international attention during 1988/89 when he won six prizes for five compositions ranging from chamber to orchestral to electroacoustic music. Oliver has been commissioned by the Canadian Opera Company, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Vancouver New Music, La Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, Ensemble Pierrot, and the St. Lawrence Quartet, among others and his music has been heard internationally on radio and in concert.

Combining familiar musical materials and techniques with new inventions, Oliver aims for a visceral yet intelligent music that plays with the audience's perception of sound and culture.

Upcoming Events

November
22 Monday
New Music Series
12:00 - 2:00 pm improvisation masterclass
2:00 - 3:00 pm presentation
Visiting Artist
François Houle, clarinet
Free admission
Studio 27, Fine Arts Building
For information, please call 492-0585

22 Monday, 8:00 pm
Contempo
Chamber Music Recital
Performers are students in Music X39
Free admission

24 Wednesday, 8:00 pm
University Symphony Orchestra
Tanya Prochazka, conductor
Concerto Competition FINALS
Admission: $10/student/senior, $15/adult

26 Friday, 4:00-6:00 pm
Piano Masterclass
Visiting Artist **Jaromir Klepac**
Free admission
For more information, please call
492-8109 or 492-0601

26 Friday, 5:00-7:00 pm
Strings Masterclasses
Visiting Artists
Kapralova Quartet
Cello - Studio 27, Fine Arts Building
Violin -1-23 Fine Arts Building
General Admission: $15/class
For more information, please call
492-8112 or 492-0601

26 Friday, 8:00 pm
The University of Alberta
Madrigal Singers
Leonard Ratzlaff, conductor
Bach *Singet dem Herrn*
Fauré *Cantique de Jean Racine*
Goodall *In Memoriam Anne Frank* and
music by Dove, Mendelssohn
and Schütz
All Saints' Anglican Cathedral
Admission: $10/student/senior, $15/adult

28 Sunday, 8:00 pm
The University of Alberta Academy
Strings and **Orchestral Winds**
Tanya Prochazka, Conductor
JS Bach *Brandenburg Concerto No 1 in*
F Major BWV 1046
Mozart *Serenade in E-Flat, K 375*
Schoenberg *Chamber Symphony*
No 1, Op 9
Admission: $10/student/senior, $15/adult

department of Music

Please donate to Campus Food Bank

Unless otherwise indicated
Convocation Hall, Arts Building, University of Alberta
Please note: All concerts and events are subject to change without notice. Please call 492-0601 to confirm concerts (after office hours a recorded message will inform you of any changes to our schedule).